

EXPRESSING PRIDE IN NORTH CAROLINA'S JOHN EDWARDS

(Mr. MILLER of North Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MILLER of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, as many other North Carolina Members have in the last few days, I rise to express my hometown pride in the presumptive Vice Presidential nominee of my party, JOHN EDWARDS. JOHN EDWARDS has been very, very successful in his life. We used to call that the American Dream. But that is not where he started out. Where he started out and how he got where he is today is important, and he has learned from it.

I know that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are very tired of hearing that Senator EDWARDS is the son of a mill worker, but it is true and it is important. He understands what most folks' lives are like because his life has been the same way. His father worked in the mill, as my father did. His mother worked in the post office. His life has been like the lives of ordinary Americans. He had to depend on public schools to get ahead. Wallace and Bobbi Edwards could never in this world have sent JOHN EDWARDS to some expensive New England boarding school. He had to go to the public schools. He understands to the depth of his soul the importance of public education for middle-class Americans and the importance of public education in creating opportunities for ordinary Americans.

TAX RELIEF IS WORKING TO STIMULATE THE ECONOMY

(Mr. PORTMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of discussion on this floor over the past year about the tax relief we passed last year for the American people, for our families, small businesses and investors. In fact, even this morning I heard again how we could not afford this tax relief, how it was wrong, how we should not have done it. I have heard again and again how it has robbed our Federal Treasury.

It should be interesting to note, then, that we have just learned that the tax receipts coming into our government this year are higher than they were before we put these tax cuts in place. Why? Because the tax relief is working to stimulate the economy and increase revenue. More people are working. Salaries are higher. Corporate revenues are higher. This means the economy is strong. Robust job growth has led to more taxpayers and more taxable income. Those are facts. Tax collections this year are \$48 billion higher than last year. In June our receipts were 11 percent higher than our receipts of June a year ago.

Earlier on the floor, one of my colleagues said, Gee, the other side is

talking about how the economy is good. They are using statistics.

Well, yes, we are using statistics because that is what the American people care about is how their jobs are doing, how the job growth is coming. Nationwide more than 1.5 million jobs have been created in the past 10 months. This means that we are creating not just jobs but good jobs. The pessimistic view is simply wrong. Real wages are up 11 percent since December of 2000. Payroll tax revenues are up. We are creating real jobs, good jobs. This will continue because of the tax relief.

VICE PRESIDENT CHENEY

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, last week the Senate Intelligence Committee concluded that even though the CIA repeatedly told the White House that it did not have any strong evidence linking Iraq to al Qaeda, Vice President CHENEY and the rest of the Bush administration went ahead and characterized a close relationship between Iraq and al Qaeda in an attempt to justify going to war in Iraq.

Despite these findings, Vice President CHENEY refuses to back down and continues to say that there was a connection between Iraq and al Qaeda. For almost 4 years now, Vice President CHENEY has abused his power, working with oil and gas executives in secret on an energy policy that only benefits those companies, refusing to tell the American people the specifics of that energy task force, supporting no-bid contracts for his former company, Halliburton, and misrepresenting his continued financial ties to that same company . . .

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend. . . .

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MILLER of Florida). The Chair must remind all Members that remarks in debate may not engage in personalities toward the President or the Vice President, or the acknowledged candidates for those offices.

Policies may be addressed in critical terms, but personal references of an offensive or accusatory nature are not proper.

The gentleman may proceed in order, if he wishes. . . . The gentleman's time has expired.

U.S.-AUSTRALIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

(Mr. CRANE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, when my colleagues and I vote on the U.S.-Australia Free Trade Agreement later

today, I hope we do so understanding that trade with Australia currently supports over 235,000 jobs here in the United States, including over 4,400 in my home State of Illinois.

Illinois exports about \$1 billion in goods and services to Australia each year, from agricultural and construction machinery, to engines, turbines and power transmission equipment, to motor vehicle parts, to general purpose machinery and to agricultural products. In short, people through nearly every sector of our economy will benefit from this agreement.

Mr. Speaker, we have a commitment to our citizens to enforce our trade agreements, which is why legislation I have authored which we will also consider today, the Customs Border Protection Act, increases by \$2 million the resources USTR has to monitor and enforce our trade agreements. I think we can all agree that this is very important. However, some will argue that we should shut our borders and build a wall around our country. That would be devastating to our economy, and I hope a strong bipartisan vote on passage of the Australia FTA today will demonstrate that conclusively.

IN DEFENSE OF TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today a House committee is going to take up a bill intended to protect traditional marriage from activist Federal judges. Ultimately, I believe, a constitutional amendment is going to be necessary to ensure the American people are in charge of defining marriage. This bill marks an important step in the right direction. We have received hundreds of calls from the people of the Third District of Texas. They are hopping mad at States like Massachusetts whose recognition of same-sex marriages could threaten the time-honored institution of marriage in the Lone Star State.

Let the record show that I am a strong supporter of the traditional family, and that is one headed by a man and a woman. To protect the values of our great Nation, I hope we see floor action on this issue next week.

□ 1030

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4759, UNITED STATES-AUSTRALIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 712 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows: